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Summary record of the 13th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 19 October 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Acharya ..... (Nepal)

Contents

Agenda item 33: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 33: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

1. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that item 33 had been allocated to the Fourth Committee as usual but also to the Sixth Committee because the latter's legal expertise was required for consideration of the draft Convention on the criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission (A/60/980, annex III) drafted by the Group of Legal Experts on ensuring the accountability of United Nations staff and experts on mission with respect to criminal acts committed in peacekeeping operations. Following joint consultations, the Bureaux of the two Committees had asked the President of the General Assembly for a more specific allocation of work under the item.

2. He invited the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations to report on developments in that field so crucial to the United Nations since the Committee's last meeting to consider the reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/60/19 and Add.1) and to adopt resolutions 60/263 and 60/289. The Under-Secretary-General would be available at the close of the meeting for an informal interactive exchange with the members of the Committee.

3. **Mr. Guéhenno** (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that the status of United Nations peacekeeping had evolved more than ever before in the past year, with over 93,000 peacekeepers currently involved in 18 operations, a number that would reach 112,000 with the deployments under way in Lebanon and Timor-Leste, and potentially 140,000 with an operation in Darfur. One hundred ten Member States were contributing military and police personnel, some for the first time; the inclusion of a naval component in one operation was another first.

4. The level of United Nations peacekeeping, with a budget of almost $6 billion, and the international attention it was receiving were unprecedented. That reflected Member States' commitment to a collective approach to addressing conflict. Such an approach, however, had to allow flexible responses targeted to the very diverse environments on the ground — ranging from a law-enforcement mandate in Timor-Leste, the monitoring of a ceasefire in Lebanon, the largest-ever election assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo or the recovery and reform assistance to the new Government in Haiti to the transition from a United Nations to a European Union peace operation in Kosovo. Yet a flexible response did not mean an inconsistent response, and the balance between consistent global engagement and specific implementation would always be a challenge that left no room for complacency.

5. The high demand for peacekeeping operations also reflected Member States' confidence in the improved planning and deployment of missions. United Nations peacekeeping could be swift and effective when backed by political will — as evidenced by recent operations relating to Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and southern Lebanon.

6. The unprecedented level of activity further evidenced a better sense of what peacekeeping could and could not do: it was never a substitute for a political process or an alternative to a Government's efforts to achieve peace. A case in point had been the national leadership shown by Africa's first elected female head of State, the Liberian President, who had worked in potent partnership with a United Nations peacekeeping mission and other international supporters.

7. The United Nations peacekeepers had become better at working with others because of a better appreciation of the effort required by many international actors and many sectors in order to move from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, as a country's needs and perspectives changed. The clearest example of the demand for joint action with regional organizations, for instance, was the partnership of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with the African Union, most notably in the Sudan, which had led to the formation of an integrated joint action team by the two. Cooperation with the European Union, meanwhile, had also continued to develop in unprecedented ways, as in the election security assistance the European Union had provided in the Democratic Republic of the Congo or the NATO-led military presence in Kosovo and Afghanistan, where the United Nations had only a civilian presence.

8. The question now was how to keep up with the global peacekeeping demand: the response would

affect the peacekeeping of the future, the authority and scope of the United Nations and the lives of millions. It must focus on two strategic priorities.

9. The first priority was to run the machinery of peacekeeping effectively, with greater professionalism and efficiency, in accordance with the reform programme he had set out the previous year in *Peace Operations 2010*. Progress had been made in a number of areas in the past year.

10. In the area of personnel, for example, the most important single step on the reform agenda would be the creation of a 2,500-strong cadre of qualified, experienced civilian peacekeepers trained in the Organization's regulations, who would be retained from mission to mission, and would give United Nations peacekeeping for the first time a stable baseline of mid-level management experts essential to any field operation. That proposal was now before the General Assembly as part of the Secretary-General's reform package.

11. Equally essential was the quality and baseline quantity of the military and police personnel so much in demand in recent operations. The recruitment of the Standing Police Capacity was well under way and, in a first phase, 25 outstanding professionals would be in place by mid-2007. At Headquarters, the burden of running the second largest global military deployment with only 12 Professional planners, however, was enormous, and the General Assembly would have to address the reinforcement of the Department's Military Division as a matter of urgency.

12. Effective performance by any peacekeeping personnel, of course, depended on the training they received. Better training courses had been designed and offered in the past year through the Integrated Training Service and a Brindisi-based team, a key element being the training and appointment of highly qualified field leaders.

13. A continuing concern was the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel. The Department was working closely with other departments and field structures to assess and mitigate the risks, and was exploring the usefulness of technical monitoring in particularly dangerous areas, but the issue of safety remained a serious one

14. In the area of doctrine, the Department had now developed a framework for incorporating lessons learned and best practices into actionable policy guidelines. When complete, its core policy document setting out the fundamental principles, objectives and conditions for the successful deployment and disengagement of United Nations peacekeeping operations would replace the very general peacekeeping guidelines dating from 1995. The Department had also launched an Intranet accessible from all 18 missions to allow the sharing and exchange of knowledge among all personnel; an upgraded version that would include feedback from the field would soon be available.

15. The Department had found that it must implement an integrated team approach within a robust organizational framework to manage its large, decentralized staff. Following an audit by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Department would be formulating concrete proposals to strengthen management capacity and conducting a department-wide review of its business processes.

16. To enhance its culture of accountability, the Department had increased its capacity for early identification of conduct issues. Conduct and discipline teams were in place at Headquarters and in eight missions, and additional teams were being established. Guidelines on how to handle cases of misconduct had been circulated in the field, and a system for tracking and investigating cases was in place at Headquarters. Further guidelines and standards on conduct were being developed, and the draft model memorandum of understanding on troop provision was being revised. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations would meet in resumed session again in order to consider the issue of sexual exploitation.

17. Procurement reform had advanced through streamlining and better oversight of procurement systems. A panel to review requirements and a dedicated office to advise missions on field procurement had been established and specialized training for procurement officers had been developed. Increased regional pooling in logistics and greater use of outsourcing had boosted efficiency. The Department's information management approach had been reviewed and, once implemented, a new Organization-wide system would facilitate comprehensive data management and verification.

18. The Department's second strategic priority was to run itself out of business. Conditions for sustainable

withdrawal had to be enhanced in order for the Department to meet new demands. Reinforced political engagement from international and national actors was often the quickest route to a sustainable exit. In order to lower its caseloads and ensure lasting stability after withdrawal, the Department needed to increase its focus on its core business and to improve the degree and quality of its support for the establishment of sustainable national security institutions and processes.

19. Security sector reform would not succeed if it were not part of an overall national security strategy encompassing early reconstruction, effective governance, human rights and sustainability. The participation of Member States, multilateral actors and international financial institutions would be vital to holistic and sustainable security sector reform. Still, unless the Department improved the rate and quality of its contribution to such wider reform, peacekeeping operations would either be protracted or, worse still, have to be reinstated.

20. Reducing the number of peacekeeping operations also meant enhancing partnerships. Effective partnerships complemented the Department's efforts by contributing components, such as economic regeneration and long-term reintegration, that were essential to post-conflict peacebuilding and for which the Department had no capacity. While still new and limited by operational regulations, joint programming with entities of the United Nations system was a more efficient way to use collective resources. The Department needed to revise regulations that impeded practical cooperation and to provide more incentives to United Nations partners to increase their coordinated programmes. The inter-agency review of the Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP) improved identification of joint programming opportunities and the coherence of the Department's approach. Guidelines and training materials were being developed in order to carry out the revised IMPP policy.

21. In a shift of perspective, peacekeeping was seen as a core United Nations activity, reflected in collective discussions and operational developments in the field. Member States had provided substantial initiative for the new approach. Yet the greatest impetus for a more effective and active Department of Peacekeeping Operations was the demand of peoples worldwide for the right to live in basic security and dignity. Peace Operations 2010 was the road map to follow to achieve the Department's objectives for, while some progress had been made, much remained to be done. He hoped the Committee would continue to support his broad strategic vision for United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.